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SUMMARY OF 304th MEETING

February 20, 1975

I. COST REDUCTION IN PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Mr. Dunton, who chaired the meeting in Mr. Rosen's absence, introduced John D.R. Cole, Director, Bureau of Personnel Management Evaluation, who discussed cost reduction in personnel management.

The President recently emphasized his deep concern for rising personnel costs in the Federal Government. Both OMB and CSC have called the attention of Agency Heads to the President's cost reduction concern - in OMB Allowance Letters issued early in February and in Chairman Hampton's Memorandum to Department and Agency Heads, dated February 7, 1975.

The urgent need for action to control these costs is evident when we consider the size of the Federal budget and the fact that personnel costs in the past ten years for a relatively stable workforce have more than doubled to over 40 billion dollars. In the past, efforts to reduce costs have taken the form of arbitrarily imposed controls. In this instance the President has agreed with a proposal by Chairman Hampton that increased attention be given to good management practices to keep costs in line, and avoid the disadvantages of arbitrary controls. In effect, this approach places a significant challenge before department and agency heads to produce results. The President will be looking for these results and has asked Chairman Hampton to report to him periodically on progress.

Following is a summary of planned CSC initiatives to promote cost reduction in personnel management. The CSC initiatives fall into four areas:

Position Management and Classification

- Increased emphasis on position management in CSC evaluation program, to assess critically the effectiveness of agency position management systems and activities, and to assure that position management concerns are adequately addressed in internal agency evaluation systems.
- Establishment of a periodic review and report by agencies of their management and utilization of supergrade position resources, with analysis and appropriate action by the CSC to abolish or reprogram lower priority positions as they become vacant.

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- Additional emphasis on accuracy of position classification, both in CSC evaluation program and in agencies' internal evaluation systems; principal focus will be on classification accuracy of higher grade positions, and the extent to which the amount of high grade work justifies the number of such positions.
- Expanded consultations with agencies on major classification actions, including: (a) proposed reorganizations with significant position management and classification implications, and (b) proposed upgradings of significant numbers of positions.

Manpower Planning and Staffing

- Encourage consideration of high quality eligibles on entry level examination registers, such as the JFA and the PACE exams, to facilitate agency hiring at the GS-4 and GS-5 levels wherever feasible.
- Additional initiatives to promote greater use of part-time employment to meet both regular and peak workload demands.
- Development of improvements in CSC competitive examining processes, to do a better job of matching available candidates with vacant positions, to promote more effective employee performance, and to reduce turnover resulting from dissatisfactions and deficiencies due to mismatches.
- Increased emphasis in CSC evaluation program and in agencies' internal personnel management evaluation systems on staffing management and analysis; principal focus will be on promoting more effective agency staffing planning, job restructuring, utilization and turnover analyses, and other efforts to assure optimum staffing practices to reduce personnel costs.

Employee Development

- Expanded and intensified CSC training leadership and information services, coupled with related efforts to improve the management of training programs Government-wide in terms of planning, budgeting, use of cost benefit analysis, and evaluation.
- Improved results from training and development efforts through greater emphasis on trainers' responsibility for improved employee performance; broader use, wherever applicable, of specific performance improvement objectives and related evaluation criteria by vendors of instruction.
- Increased emphasis, both in agencies' internal evaluation systems and through CSC's evaluation program, on: (a) the efficiency and effectiveness of training obtained through non-Government facilities, and (b) the effectiveness of both agency and interagency training programs in improving performance, increasing efficiency, and enhancing organizational effectiveness.

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- Accelerated schedule for handoff to agencies of CSC-developed training packages, as well as accelerated efforts to develop alternative means to instructor-delivered formal training, including off-the-shelf individualized learning packages such as correspondence courses, video-assisted training, and programmed learning texts.

Incentive Systems

- Intensify promotion of Government-wide suggestions program to involve managers, supervisors and their employees more effectively in: (a) identifying opportunities for operational improvements that will result in cost reduction, (b) accelerating the consideration and adoption of worthwhile suggestions, and (c) enhancing the recognition of successful suggestors.
- Improved linkage between Government Incentives Program and agencies' improvement efforts to achieve increased efficiency and cost reduction; better integration of Government-wide emphasis on "Management by Objectives" and needs for cost reduction in personnel management.
- Revised guidance to agencies which clarifies use of special achievement awards for sustained superior performance and quality increases, to achieve more cost effective personnel management through proper use of these two forms of recognition.

The initiatives that agencies take in response to the President's concern will be critical to success. Top management executives and all those they lead must share a sense of urgency in translating good management and improved performance into cost reduction. Obviously, this is not a "personnel office operation". The creative participation of managers, supervisors and employees is needed in a sustained effort to build cost consciousness into the personnel system and operations. A key factor is the fixing of responsibility and accountability for cost reduction as part of each manager's job.

Two important linkages must be made in managing agency personnel cost reduction activities: (1) objectives and plans must be established as part of the management planning process and (2) internal personnel management evaluation must be tied to cost reduction.

Chairman Hampton will be reporting to the President on progress periodically. Agencies have been asked to report to the Chairman by May 15, 1975 on the actions they have already taken, the results achieved to date, and the additional results they plan to achieve in FY-75 and FY-76. Agencies will be advised later concerning requirements for future reports.

It is obvious that cost-effective Government is and will continue to be a major concern. The President has asked for our help in slowing the upward trend of these costs. Personnel officers' contribution to this goal is full of potential, and during the IAG Personnel Directors Conference in April we will be exploring ways of realizing this potential for making a more meaningful contribution to productivity. organization.

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II. PUBLIC SERVICE BRIEFING PROGRAM FOR POLICY EXECUTIVES

James R. Beck, Director, Bureau of Training, highlighted the newly-established Public Service Briefing Program for new policy executives to be managed by the Civil Service Commission in cooperation with the White House and the Office of Management and Budget.

The purpose of the new program is to assist individuals in their transitions to major public offices by informing them about Government processes and policies. Although the idea for such a briefing dates back to the 1950's, this represents the first time that a comprehensive program has been initiated. It will play an important part in the President's effort to improve the management of the Federal Government.

The briefing program has three main objectives:

- To familiarize new policy executives with key administrative processes, laws and regulations.
- To acquaint new executives with Federal policies and processes, the external environment in which they must operate, and with the role and responsibilities of policy executives.
- To inform new executives about current Presidential policies and programs.

To achieve these objectives, several efforts are underway. The Civil Service Commission will be working closely with departments and agencies to improve their internal briefing programs. There will also be a centralized effort involving three sequential elements.

- First, briefing materials will be sent to persons selected for policy level positions. These materials will provide data and perspective and will be usable for future reference.
- Second, during the first three weeks on the job, each new policy executive will have an opportunity to attend an evening meeting with other new executives and experts in the field. These sessions will provide information on how to increase the executives' personal effectiveness.
- Finally, an intensive briefing will provide information about managing effectively in Government, the role of the policy executive, and Presidential policies and programs. These briefings will be scheduled quarterly so that all new policy executives appointed during the previous three months will attend.

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It is expected that several hundred new policy executives, most in Executive Levels II, III, IV, and V positions, will benefit from this program during 1975. A meeting is planned soon with members of the IAG Committee on Development and Training to discuss the program. Program sponsors are now in the process of informing departments and agencies of the program and planning a briefing to be held in April 1975.

III. NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE SUMMER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Ms. Vie Kaufman, Assistant Director, Summer Fellowship Program, National Urban League, discussed the program and reviewed its coordination with Government agencies in placing faculty members from minority colleges into jobs during the summer months.

The Fellowship Program serves to provide faculty with relevant experience in Government agencies; new data for use in curriculum development and student counseling; as well as access to resources (technical expertise, equipment, etc.). The program, on the other hand, provides Government management with insights into the role, problems, and programs of minority colleges; an opportunity to create and strengthen relationships between agencies and minority colleges; and academic expertise in the implementation of agency programs. Benefits to participating colleges and agencies include: increased recruiting resources on minority campuses, research grants, curriculum development (new courses, agency lecturers, etc.) and initiation of student intern programs. Since 1965, 143 companies, 19 Government agencies and 1,000 teachers, representing 72 minority colleges, have participated.

Under the Fellowship Program, the participating agency develops the assignment and selects faculty from an applicant roster supplied by the National Urban League. Participating agencies pay faculty on the basis of the GS grade for the position being filled. Assignments range from six weeks to three months. Most projects are in the following disciplines: Business, Economics, Engineering, Mathematics, and the Natural Sciences. To ensure that applicants of interest are still available, employment offers should be made no later than March 31, 1975. Inquiries should be addressed to:

National Urban League
Summer Fellowship Program
55 East 52nd Street
New York, N.Y. 10022